

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

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EXDIS

EYES ONLY FOR GLEYSTEN AND TARNOFF FROM HOLBROOKE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, KS, US

SUBJ: PRESS CONFERENCE IN SEOUL

REF: STATE 083690

1. MANY THANKS FOR YOUR CABLE ON FRASER LETTER.

2. THE FACTS ARE QUITE SIMPLE, AND FRASER'S CONCERN IS MISPLACED. THE ONLY CALL I MADE IN SEOUL WAS A BRIEF COURTESY CALL ON FOREIGN MINISTER. DURING IT WE REVIEWED VERY QUICKLY ITEMS COVERED DURING FOREIGN MINISTER'S MEETING WITH THE PRESIDENT IN EARLY MARCH, INCLUDING HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE. ENTIRE CALL WAS ABOUT 20 MINUTES AND WAS OF NO GREAT CONSEQUENCE. THAT EVENING AT AMBASSADOR'S RECEPTION, I DELIBERATELY AND VISIBLY SPENT ABOUT 20 MINUTES TALKING TO TWO OF MYONGDONG DEFENDENTS, REITERATING PRESIDENT'S COMMITMENT TO HUMAN RIGHTS. I ALSO SENT A REPLY TO MRS. KIM DAE JUNG'S LETTER TO ME. (REPORTED SEPTTEL).

3. PRESS CONFERENCE TOOK PLACE BETWEEN THESE TWO CALLS. THE GUIDANCE THAT HAS BEEN SENT DOWN BY THE PRESIDENT AND WHICH WE
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 JAKART 04799 141648Z

HAVE REPEATEDLY COMMUNICATED TO THE KOREANS IS THAT FOR THE TIMING BEING WE WILL REFRAIN FROM PUBLIC ATTACKS ON ROK FOR HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS, WITH CLEAN UNDERSTANDING ON BOTH SIDES THAT OUR "RETICENCE" WILL NOT LAST INDEFINITELY IF THERE IS NO MOVEMENT. IT IS DICK SNEIDER'S JUDGEMENT, WHICH I SHARE, THAT HAVING SAID THIS IS OUR POLICY, WE MUST STICK TO IT AND TEST IT. DICK IS DOING JUST THAT RIGHT NOW, WITH VIGOR.

4. WITHIN THE ABOVE GUIDANCE I ANSWERED A QUESTION ABOUT HUMAN RIGHTS WITH A GENERAL STATEMENT OF THE PRESIDENT'S CONCERN, AND ADDED THAT WE HAD ALREADY EXPRESSED OUR CONCERN PUBLICLY AND PRIVATELY OVER SITUATION IN KOREA. IN ANSWER TO ANOTHER QUESTION, SAID HAD NOT DISCUSSED HUMAN RIGHTS WITH FOREIGN MINISTER -
- "NOT TODAY."

5. ALL OTHER JOURNALISTS SEEMED TO UNDERSTAND WHAT HAD BEEN SAID. JOHN SALZBERG ALSO SEEMED TO UNDERSTAND. I SHOWED HIM ENTIRE PRESS CONFERENCE TRANSCRIPT LATER AND DREW HIS ATTENTION TO THIS PARTICULAR EXCHANGE, EXPLAINING GENERAL REASON BEHIND IT."

6. IN SUM,BOETTCHER SEEMS TO HAVE MISUNDERSTOOD BOTH OUR- AND MY PERSONAL - COMMITMENT TO HUMAN RIGHTS IN KOREA AS WELL AS OUR STRATEGY.

7. I HOPE YOU WILL USE WHATEVER OF THE FOREGOING IS USEFUL TO CLARIFY SITUATION. I THINK WE ARE NOW PURSUING A DIFFICULT BUT ESSENTIAL POLICY IN REGARD TO HUMAN RIGHTS AND IT WOULD BE A SHAME IF SUCH A MINOR MISUNDERSTANDING WERE TO GROW. ADDITIONALLY, I BELIEVE THAT OUR PRESENT APPROACH IS CONSISTENT WITH DON FRASER'S COMMENT TO THE SECRETARY ABOUT "QUIET DIPLOMACY AT THIS TIME."

8. FINALLY, YOU SHOULD KNOW THAT DAVE NEWSOM AND I HAVE PURSUED SAME ISSUE HERE WITH ALL SENIOR MEMBERS OF INDONESIAN GOVERNMENT, INCLUDING PRESIDENT SUHARTO IN A LONG CONVERSATION THIS EVENING WHICH WE WILL BE REPORTING SEPTEL. WE HAVE DISCUSSED NEWSWEEK ISSUE, DETAINEES, TIMOR, AND GENERAL TREATMENT OF JOURNALISTS, AND ONCE
SECRET

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PAGE 03 JAKART 04799 141648Z

AGAIN, AS IN SEOUL, WE HAVE MET PUBLICLY WITH SEVERAL DISSIDENTS.

9. HOPE THIS HELPS. WARM REGARDS.
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